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# Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05 ARA-10 /104 W
----------024138 101616Z /12
R 100645Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2905
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY MASERU POUCH
AMEMBASSY MBABANE POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 GABORONE 2510

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV OAU BC
SUBJ: BOTSWANA'S FOREIGN POLICY: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

1. SUMMARY. TWO GOB MINISTERS AND SENIOR PRIVATE SECRETARY (POLITICAL) LEGWAILA DESCRIBED PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH AT OAU SUMMIT AS OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF GOB FOREIGN POLICY. THIS TELEGRAM OUTLINES AND ANALYZES THE PRINCIPAL THEMES AS REVEALED IN THAT SPEECH ALONG WITH INTERPRETIVE COMMENTS OF THE TWO MINISTERS AND LEGWAILA, WHO WAS THE AUTHOR. END SUMMARY

2. SOCIAL OCCASION AUG 7 PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSION OF PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH TO OAU SUMMIT AT KHARTOUM WITH TWO GOB MINISTERS: MINISTER OF HEALTH MASISI AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION MORAKE. BOTH STATED THAT THEY HAD PARTICIPATED IN CABINET MEETINGS WHERE THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH WAS DISCUSSED AND APPROVED. THEY AGREED IT WAS AN AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT OF GOB FOREIGN POLICY. SENIOR PRIVATE SECRETARY LEGWAILA ACKNOW-
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LEDGED AUTHORSHIP OF THE SPEECH. FOR THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR WE DISCUSSED ITS PRINCIPAL THEMES.

3. THEMES. LEGWAILA SAID IT WAS HIS INTENTION (AS DRAFTING OFFICER) TO FOCUS ON THE SUBJECT OF OUTSIDE INTERVENTION WHICH HAD EMERGED IN ADVANCE AS THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE AT KHARTOUM. LEGWAILA NOTED OPPOSITION TO INTERVENTION HAD BEEN

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STATED IN STRONG TERMS, I.E., "WHETHER IT COMES UNDER THE GUISE
OF FRIENDSHIP OR ENMITY". LEGWAILA SAID THE PRINCIPAL TARGETS
OF THIS LANGUAGE WERE THE CUBANS AND RUSSIANS ALTHOUGH THE WORDS
WERE SUFFICIENTLY BROAD TO INCLUDE FRANCE AND BELGIUM. ASKED
HOW STRICT OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION COULD BE
RECONCILED WITH GOB'S SUPPORT FOR ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS
(AAP) ON RHODESIA AND/OR CONTACT GROUP (CG) PROPOSALS FOR
NAMIBIA, LEGWAILA SAID IT IS UNDERSTOOD IN OAU CIRCLES THAT
OMISSION IS EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT. HE COULD ASSURE US THAT GOB
SUPPORT FOR CG AND AAP PROPOSALS IS NO LESS STRONG THAN
BEFORE. LEGWAILA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE REALITIES WERE SUCH
THAT INTERVENTION WOULD NOT SOON END BUT HE DEFENDED A STRICT
RESTATEMENT OF IT AS A FUNDAMENTAL GOAL AND PRINCIPLE.

4. SECURITY. THIS LED TO THE RELATED THEME OF SECURITY.
IN THE FACE OF ACKNOWLEDGED OAU INABILITY TO ASSURE SECURITY,
WHAT WAS THE MEANING OF THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT AT KHARTOUM
THAT "SECURITY OF OUR CONTINENT CAN ONLY BE GUARANTEED BY
OURSELVES...SECURITY FOR OUR RESPECTIVE STATES LIES IN OUR
OWN EFFORTS BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY"? LEGWAILA
JUSTIFIED AND DEFENDED THIS POSITION ON GROUNDS THAT ANY OTHER
STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE WAS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE FEELING OF
"PRIDE" AND SELF-RELIANCE THAT AFRICANS REQUIRE IF THEY ARE
EVER TO ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY, EVEN IF THIS MEANS SOME
"MISMANAGEMENT". ADMITTEDLY, THE OAU WAS INEFFECTIVE; THE ONLY
THING WORSE WOULD BE ADMISSION OF THE RIGHT OF OUTSIDERS
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TO TAKE CARE OF AFRICA'S SECURITY CONCERNS WHEN IN FACT THEIR
AIM (IN KHAMA'S WORDS) IS TO "PROVIDE SECURITY FOR EUROPEAN
INTERESTS IN AFRICA". WHATEVER THE IMMEDIATE GAINS
(AND HE RECOGNIZED THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES COULD NOT BE EXPECTED
TO STAND BY AND WATCH WHILE THEIR NATIONALS ARE BRUTALLY
TORTURED), THE LONGER TERM DISADVANTAGES COUNSEL STEADY
OPPOSITION TO OUTSIDE INTERVENTION BECAUSE IT "SOWS THE SEEDS
OF DESTRUCTION AND DESTABILIZATION".

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 GABORONE 2510

5. SOUTHERN AFRICA. A KEY REASON FOR SUSPECTING
ERUOPEAN INTERVENTION, LEGWAILA NOTED, IS THAT "IT TAKES
LITTLE EFFORT (FOR EUROPEANS) TO MOUNT RESCUE MISSIONS...
WHEN THEIR INTERESTS...OR THE LIVES OF THEIR KITH AND KIN
ARE IN DANGER. WE ARE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT THIS AS A SINCERE
CONCERN ON THEIR PART FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CONTINENT."
HOWEVER, THESE SAME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE NOT "PREPARED TO
RENDER US THE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE AS WE ENDEAVOR TO LIBERATE
THE REMAINING POCKETS OF COLONIALISM AND OPPRESSION IN OUR
CONTINENT. THESE COUNTRIES FEEL IT IS WRONG FOR ZIMBABWEANS
AND NAMIBIANS TO RESORT TO VIOLENCE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE
AND HAVE THUS REFUSED TO ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES WITH OUR LIBERATION
STRUGGLES." WHEN I ASKED THE TWO MINISTERS AND LEGWAILA IF
THIS LANGUAGE MEANT THAT THE GOB HAD CHANGED ITS POLICY AND
WAS NOW SUPPORTING THE USE OF ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST SOUTH
AFRICA, THEY SAID NO CHANGE HAD OCCURRED, THAT THE GOB HAS LONG
ACCEPTED THE NECESSITY OF ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST INTRACTABLE
OPPOSITION. PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH AT PRINCETON IN 1976
WAS AN EXAMPLE, LEGWAILA NOTED. THERE KHAMA OUTLINED THE
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NECESSITY OF ACTION TO STIMULATE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN
POLICY. ALL THREE ADDED THAT GOB HAD NOT ABANDONED THE
POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING PROGRESS BY PEACEFUL MEANS BUT THERE
WAS A LIMIT TO THEIR PATIENCE. SOUTH AFRICA SHOWED NO IN-
CLINATION WHATSOEVER TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS, A POINT MADE
CLEARLY IN THE RECENT RAND DAILY MAIL EDITORIAL STATING THAT
NEGOTIATIONS ON POWER-SHARING WITH BLACKS ARE ESSENTIAL.
MORAKE CITED A TSWANA PROVERB THAT TRANSLATED: "WHEN WALKING
BEHIND A DEAF PERSON, IT IS NECESSARY TO THROW STONES TO DRAW
ATTENTION." THE SAG HAS SHOWN ITSELF TO BE DEAF; THE
ONLY WAY TO DRAW ATTENTION IS TO THROW STONES.

6. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, LEGWAILA AGREED GOB HAS NOT

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WRITTEN OFF THE POSSIBILITY OF PROGRESS BY PEACEFUL MEANS;
BUT KHARTOUM SPEECH IS AGREED GOB POLICY DECISION TO TAKE
"ANOTHER STEP TOWARD ACKNOWLEDGING AND CONDONING" ARMED
STRUGGLE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. ASKED WHETHER THIS MEANT THE
GOB WAS PREPARED TO ASSIST BY MAKING BASES AVAILABLE FOR
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, THE THREE GOB OFFICIALS WERE QUICK TO
OFFER DENIALS. THIS THEY SAW AS INCURRING AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK
OF SAG RETALIATION. THE GOB MUST CONTROL ITS TERRITORY AND IS
DETERMINED TO ACQUIRE A CREDIBLE CAPABILITY TO DETER ANY
MOVEMENTS OR PERSONS FROM CHALLENGING THAT CONTROL. IN
PRACTICE, IT MEANS THE GOB WILL GIVE "MORAL SUPPORT" AND CONDONE
USE OF FORCE BY OTHERS FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH AFRICA.
IT CONTINUES TO ASK FOR EXAEMPTION FOR ITSELF (BECAUSE OF ITS
WEAKNESS AND VULNERABILITY) FROM BEING ASKED TO PLAY ANY
DIRECT ROLE.

7. FRIENDS AND FOES. KHAMA'S SPEECH ADDRESSED TWO OTHER
QUESTIONS OF INTEREST: WHO ARE FRIENDS? AND WHAT IS GOB
ATTITUDE TOWARD RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA? AS TO
FRIENDS, THEY ARE DEFINED AS HAVING TWO QUALITIES: (A) "THOSE
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OUTSIDERS WHO...GENUINELY SHARE OUR ASPIRATIONS" AND (B)
"THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO RENDER US THE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE
AS WE ENDEAVOR TO LIBERATE THE REMAINING POCKETS OF COLONIALISM
AND OPPRESSION IN OUR CONTINENT". LEGWAILA RELATED FRIENDSHIP
AND NON-INTERVENTION AND CALLED ATTENTION TO THE SENTENCE IN
KHAMA'S SPEECH WHICH STATES: "WE WILL APPRECIATE GENUINE
FRIENDSHIP BUT NOT WANTON INTERFERENCE, COVERT OR OVERT, IN
OUR AFFAIRS, EITHER IN THE NAME OF FRIENDSHIP OR IN THE
PURSUIT OF IDEOLOGICAL COMRADESHIP OR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE".
FINALLY, KHAMA CRITICIZED RUSSIANS AND CHINESE, ALTHOUGH NOT
BY NAME, ON TWO GROUNDS: FIRST, "PRESENCE OF...ARMED MEN FROM
DISTANT PLACES IS SIMPLY INIMICAL TO THE STABILITY OF THIS
CONTINENT"; SECOND, AFTER EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR
"ASSISTANCE WHICH SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND OTHERS HAVE
RENDERED TO THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA",
PRESIDENT STATES "WE HOPE SUCH ASSISTANCE WILL NOT BE USED TO
HOLD TO RANSOM THOSE WHO WILL HAVE BEEN SO ASSISTED." SPEECH
TEXT GOES ON TO NOTE BELIEF "THAT THOSE WHO ARE ASSISTED
BY FOREIGN POWERS...MUST IN TURN OWE ALLEGIANCE TO THOSE
FOREIGN POWERS OR ELSE THE GOVERNMENTS...SHOULD BE SUBVERTED
AND REPLACED WITH ONES THAT WILL TOE THE IDEOLOGICAL LINE
OF THEIR MENTORS". AS LEGWAILA NOTED, REFERENCES TO IDEOLOGY
ARE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD TO POINT TO SOVIET UNION AND CUBA.



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8. COMMENT. THE OAU SUMMIT IS HARDLY AN IDEAL FORUM FOR A THOUGHTFUL AND OBJECTIVE STATEMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY. BY ITS AUTHOR'S OWN TESTIMONY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH TRADITION, THERE IS AN APPARENT IMBALANCE THAT COMES FROM TACIT UNDERSTANDING THAT, AT OAU MEETINGS, ONE DOES NOT ARTICULATE APPROVAL OF ACTIONS WESTERN COUNTRIES MAY TAKE. WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THOSE FAMILIAR WITH BACKGROUND AND SUBSTANCE, HOWEVER, PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH STANDS AS A RESPONSIBLE AND REASONABLE REITERATION OF GOB POLICY. THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS THAT, DESPITE THE GRAVE RISKS INVOLVED, THE GOB IS GRADUALLY BEING DRAWN BY RHODESIAN AND SAG INTRANSIGENCE, INTO A POSITION OF OPEN ENCOURAGEMENT OF (BUT NOT ASSISTANCE TO) THE ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPRESSIVE MINORITY REGIMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. PRESSURES FROM RADICAL STATES AND LIBERATION GROUPS ARE UNLIKELY TO ALLOW GOB TO DO ANYTHING ELSE.
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# Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a
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**Copy:** SINGLE
**Draft Date:** 10 aug 1978
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960
**Decaption Note:**
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014
**Disposition Event:**
**Disposition History:** n/a
**Disposition Reason:**
**Disposition Remarks:**
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**Enclosure:** n/a
**Executive Order:** GS
**Errors:** N/A
**Expiration:**
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a
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**Review Release Event:** n/a
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**SAS ID:** 1781556
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**Status:** NATIVE
**Subject:** BOTSWANA\'S FOREIGN POLICY: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE
**TAGS:** PDEV, BC, OAU, (KHAMA, SERETSE M)
**To:** STATE
**Type:** TE
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**Review Markings:**
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